

The Greater Montréal Real Estate Board is Pleased That the Welcome Tax is on the Radar of Many Candidates Running in the Montréal Area Municipal Election

L'Île-des-Sœurs, November 2, 2017 – The Greater Montréal Real Estate Board (GMREB) is pleased to see that homeownership has become an important issue in the upcoming municipal election. Several candidates for various mayor positions in the Greater Montréal area have made commitments to better support first-time buyers. One of the best tools for supporting these first-time buyers is an expanded refund of the Land Transfer Tax.

Also known as the "Welcome Tax", the Land Transfer Tax represents a significant expense for first-time buyers who are struggling to qualify for their first mortgage due to the different regulatory tightening measures implemented by the federal government. For a house in the Montréal CMA that costs \$320,500 (median price), the Land Transfer Tax represents a total of \$3,308.

"We are very pleased to see that the candidates running in the municipal election are making the same observation as we are regarding the obstacle that the Land Transfer Tax poses to homeownership. Ontario has implemented a rebate program for first-time buyers, which we believe is the way to go," said Mr. Mathieu Cousineau, President of the GMREB Board of Directors.

The GMREB notes that the reimbursement of the Land Transfer Tax, in whole or in part, is the subject of specific commitments by the main candidates in the cities of Montréal, Terrebonne, Longueuil, Mirabel and Brossard. Once elected, several candidates intend to implement municipal homeownership strategies. This enthusiasm for homeownership is being seen for the first time.

"Cities that now have new financial tools under Bill 122, particularly with a new tax level for the Land Transfer Tax, can fund homeownership initiatives. Data from Statistics Canada's most recent census are conclusive, indicating that the Montréal CMA's homeownership rate (55.7 per cent) continues to lag behind the Canadian average (67.8 per cent). It's time to tackle this important economic issue," added Mr. Cousineau.

GMREB representatives will continue to meet with municipal election candidates before the November 5 municipal election and provide them with information on the need to implement tools that support first-time buyers.

About the Greater Montréal Real Estate Board

The Greater Montréal Real Estate Board is a non-profit organization with more than 9,000 members: real estate brokers. Its mission is to actively promote and protect its members' professional interests in order for them to successfully meet their business objectives.

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